

ALIGNING INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING WITH THE AIM POINT

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

ALIGNING INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING WITH THE AIM POINT

by

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ABSTRACT

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How do we define and train for military engagement? Trainers have struggled with this question since the attack on the World Trade Center (9/11). The initial answer focused efforts to prepare Soldiers for the immediate combat they would experience in theater. While this was a great first effort, it resulted in training that literally evolved with the situation in Iraq. Over the course of this evolution in training, numerous lessons learned increased the effectiveness of training across all the Initial Entry Training (IET) bases and set the conditions for continued improvements. As we continue the long engagement in the Global War on Terror (GWOT), our senior leaders recognize the risk of specializing our training versus preparing Soldiers for the full spectrum of operations. With the current momentum for change within the IET environment, it is critical to analyze what the training requirements are to prepare Soldiers for both the current environment in Iraq as well as missions across the full spectrum of operations. This project analyzes the changes that took place in IET since 9/11, feedback from theater and the training centers, and guidance within our doctrine in order to develop and recommend ways to realign our IET training focus.

ALIGNING INITIAL ENTRY TRAINING WITH THE AIM POINT

The whole of military activity must therefore relate directly or indirectly to the engagement. The end for which a soldier is recruited, clothed, armed, and trained, the whole object of his sleeping, eating, drinking, and marching is simply that he should fight at the right place and the right time. If all threads lead to the engagement, then if we control the engagement, we comprehend them all.¹

—Carl von Clausewitz

Introduction

As Clausewitz so notably pointed out the purpose for which we train a Soldier is the engagement, but how do we define this engagement?² Trainers have struggled with this question since the attack on the World Trade Center (9/11). The initial answer focused efforts to prepare Soldiers for the immediate combat they would experience in theater. While this was a great first effort, it resulted in training that literally evolved with the situation in Iraq. Over the course of this evolution in training, numerous lessons learned increased the effectiveness of training across all the Initial Entry Training (IET) bases and set the conditions for continued improvements. These rapid adjustments in the training focus became more challenging as we migrated from conventional training, to Forward Operating Base (FOB) centric training, and ultimately to Counterinsurgency (COIN) training.

As we continue the long engagement in the Global War on Terror (GWOT), our senior leaders recognize the risk of specializing our training versus preparing Soldiers for the full spectrum of operations. In a speech in August 2007, Army Chief of Staff, GEN Casey, said, “Right now we are focused on counterinsurgency training. We need to get back to full spectrum training as soon as we can.”³ He continued, “We can’t get the future exactly right, so our forces must be able to adapt for full spectrum

operations.”⁴ With the current momentum for change within the IET environment, it is critical to analyze what the training requirements are to prepare Soldiers for both the current environment in Iraq as well as missions across the full spectrum of operations. This project analyzes the changes that took place in IET since 9/11, feedback from theater and the training centers, and guidance within our doctrine in order to develop and recommend ways to realign our IET training focus.

How IET Evolved since 9/11

Understanding how IET evolved since 9/11 is critical to establishing a baseline for future change. The IET environment, steeped in tradition, had all the trimmings of a well-entrenched institution. GEN Schoomaker took the lead in change for IET as well as the Army as a whole.⁵ His strategic leadership opened the way for commanders within IET to make necessary changes to improve training for their Soldiers. Accessions Command undertook an IET Task Force to study and plan changes then provided the flexibility for commanders to pilot and proof the changes in the training environment.⁶ Ultimately, the key to success of all the changes rested upon the non-commissioned officers within IET as they wrestled with the cultural changes associated with evolving this well-established institution.

Strategic Leadership from the Chief of Staff of the Army, GEN Schoomaker

Amidst all the uncertainty and ambiguity of the GWOT GEN Schoomaker identified the one constant variable – the Soldier. Following the events surrounding the 507th Maintenance Company at Nasiriyah during the early stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Army realized the need to better prepare all Soldiers for the rigor of combat, regardless of their military occupation specialty (MOS). On the heels of this tragic event,

the Army adopted the Soldiers' Creed, Warrior Ethos, and the supporting Warrior Tasks and Drills to focus training in order to accomplish this end. From 2003 until the present, IET experienced a stunning transformation focused on training soldiers of all MOS's in these warrior skills to better prepare them for the combat they would experience almost immediately upon graduation from their Advanced Individual Training (AIT).

As mentioned earlier, GEN Schoomaker refocused the Army by directing all efforts to its base element, the Soldier. Task Force Soldier and the new phrase "Soldier as a System" took on new life as the driving force for change from the bottom up.⁷ Task Force Soldier developed and implemented the "Warrior Tasks and Drills" that became the new measure in basic Soldier training across the Army.⁸ Starting with the training base in TRADOC, all new Soldiers received training in these critical warrior skills. These Warrior Tasks and Drills originated from input from the numerous after action comments compiled by Task Force Soldier and the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) at Fort Leavenworth. This new focus embedded the ethos that every member of the Army is a Soldier first and more importantly is a warrior with the requisite skills to conduct combat on an individual level.⁹ Gone were the days of the linear battlefield with a front. On the new non-contiguous battlefield, the front was throughout and all Soldiers faced its challenges daily.

GEN Schoomaker established the identity of all Soldiers in the words of the Soldiers' Creed. The Soldiers' Creed and the Warrior Ethos became the focus for every new recruit and codified the transformation of our Army. From basic training to pre-commissioning, this creed became the cornerstone for the ethos that would permeate

from the bottom up.¹⁰ It focused training and prioritized resources while deepening the warrior identity in our organizational culture.

The IET Task Force

In 2003, more than a year after the beginning of the GWOT, basic training saw no change to the traditional “Cold War” model of the mid 1980’s. Focus remained on the most basic of combat skills, rifle marksmanship, and group discipline through Drill and Ceremony (D&C) as defined by Von Steuben over 200 years earlier.¹¹ To say there was little change in training methods was a vast understatement. To wonder how such an incident as the one with the 507th Maintenance unit could occur was the height of naivety. Soldiers of all occupational skills trained on individual skills in a sterile environment leaving them unprepared for the combat they would soon experience in Iraq.¹² In an effort to address these severe shortcomings, TRADOC stood up the IET Task Force with the specific mission of researching this problem. This Task Force conducted a bottom-up review of IET and mapped the way ahead for integrating the guidance from GEN Schoomaker, along with the ideas from Task Force Soldier, to improve training for all Soldiers in Basic and Advanced Individual Training.¹³

The IET Task Force conducted a bottom-up review of the program of instruction (POI) for basic training and identified numerous tasks that were outdated or considered a misuse of time. For example, Soldiers trained to conduct challenge and password at “sling arms” as opposed to having their weapon at the ready.¹⁴ Some of these tasks, last updated in the early 1980s, were remnants of the Cold War. While an update of the tasks trained was critical, the most important dialogue from the IET Task Force was the discussion of discipline. This discussion revolved around two opinions. One opinion

believed strongly in hours of D&C while the other opinion focused on developing self-discipline in each Soldier. An analysis of feedback from Operation Iraqi Freedom I (OIF-I) revealed a strong need for self-discipline based on the situations and decisions each Soldier was required to make in combat.¹⁵ This argument enabled the Task Force to free up over 90 hours of training time that was devoted to training D&C. While many fought to save D&C, a 200+ year old maneuver formation drill, ultimately trainers salvaged this time for training tasks that were more relevant to each Soldier's survival on the battlefield. Along with the concept of self-discipline, the IET Task Force, along with Task Force Soldier, codified the Warrior Tasks and Drills required in IET.¹⁶

A Revolution in Training

The results of the IET Task Force laid the foundation of change in the approach to training in the IET community. These results led to pilot programs that immediately integrated these new concepts into training and ultimately into the POI as changes. By the end of 2004, basic training included advanced marksmanship techniques, reflexive fire, advanced first aid, and tactical questioning. Additionally, Soldiers performed as members of a fire team or squad during the conduct of checkpoint Operations, Enter and Clear rooms, Convoy Operations, and Movement to Contact.¹⁷

As training continued to evolve and more information returned from theater, trainers added tasks to the POI and changed conditions. By summer of 2005, Soldiers in IET wore body armor from Day 1 and carried their weapons all the time (24/7) to replicate some of the conditions in combat.¹⁸ Over the course of the 9-week IET, the Soldiers went from wearing just the body armor vest the first 3 weeks to wearing both sappy plates by the 7th week of training.¹⁹ The field training exercise (FTX) at the end

increased from the old 3-day camp-out to a full 11-day exercise operating out of a FOB. During this FTX, commanders evaluated the Soldiers during squad operations including Checkpoint Operations, Enter and Clear Rooms/Buildings, Security Patrols, and a Convoy Live Fire Exercise.²⁰

Since 2005, commanders continued to modify this training making necessary adjustments based on feedback from combat. Additional adjustments to the training included judgment-based skills, Soldier as a sensor, and cultural awareness.²¹

The judgment-based skills training, based on the theory of escalation of force, is meant to help Soldiers use their judgment to make “life or death” decisions as they apply to current rules of engagement (ROE) and use of force policies.²² This training helps Soldiers with judgments or decisions that could have significant effects on their unit, local populace view of the American Soldier, as well as major political results.

While trainers are attempting to integrate Soldier as a sensor and cultural awareness training, there is currently no additional time or resources allocated to the POI to facilitate this training. Commanders attempt to integrate these into the conditions of training to the extent possible and discuss the implications during after action reviews (AARs).²³

Changes to the IET Culture

Enacting change in a traditional institution like basic training is virtually impossible without significant cultural changes. Basic Training by its name alone indicates the training of rudimentary tasks that are routine to all Soldiers, yet we were asking our Drill Sergeants to teach advanced individual skills common only to infantry Soldiers. Outside of Fort Benning units, the majority of the Drill Sergeants were not infantry and most

were not even combat arms. At the initial introduction of the changes, many of our Drill Sergeants had not been in theater or had only experienced the initial “thunder run” to Bagdad. What our Drill Sergeants lacked in experience, they made up for in personal leadership ability.

To transform the culture of IET, the leadership at Fort Knox developed and implemented a set of squad lanes later known as the “Warrior Challenge.”²⁴ These squad lanes included Checkpoint Operations, Enter and Clear Rooms/Buildings, Security Patrols, and a Convoy Movement. The leadership required the Drill Sergeants to perform as the squad leader in both the train-up and evaluation of these lanes during the FTX. The Warrior Challenge in its simplest form was a set of scenario driven tactical lanes designed to challenge both the Drill Sergeants and Soldiers in the conduct of squad-level tactical missions while demonstrating the application of individual skills learned during IET.²⁵ The original intent of the Warrior Challenge was to force the development of the non-combat arms MOS Drill Sergeants, many of which lacked combat experience.²⁶ Due to their intense professionalism, these Drill Sergeants learned the missions and appropriate leadership style to complete these missions to standard regardless of their MOS or experience. The second and third order effects of this began to change the culture of IET by tapping into the tremendous leadership and training potential of our great NCO Corps instead of limiting it with an outdated POI.²⁷

While all the changes to training were definite improvements from the previous standard, they all lacked focus. Each change of the training environment resulted from real-time feedback from theater. This evolved from traditional offensive and defensive

training, to FOB centric training, and is now migrating toward COIN training. The one constant remains the Warrior Tasks and Drills.

Recommendations from the Field and Guidance from Doctrine

In determining what changes should be made it is important to identify what we are actually doing in combat and training and compare it to what doctrine says we are supposed be doing. There are numerous AARs from the force, both deployed and in training, that provide real-time information on the performance of our Soldiers and their training needs. Our doctrine on COIN (FM 3-24) and Operations (FM3-0) provide insight into how we should prepare for and execute operations across the spectrum of conflict. Our most recent doctrine, Training the Force (FM 7-0), helps us in defining the aim point of our training.²⁸

AARs from the Force

While there are numerous AARs from the force, the most informative for this research project were the 3ID AAR for OIF-I, and an AAR from an infantry company commander from OIF-I as well. Each AAR provides insight into actual combat results in full spectrum operations where the evaluation metric was the lives of American Soldiers.

Reviewing the lessons learned from 3ID in preparation for OIF-I, the salient point was the importance of preparing for full spectrum operations through effective live fire training.²⁹ During the attack in Iraq, 3ID experienced combat across the entire spectrum. As offensive operations culminated in and around Bagdad, Soldiers who had violently attacked enemy formations with the world's most lethal systems over the previous three weeks were required to secure neighborhoods and conduct humanitarian assistance operations in areas they had just fought through the day before.³⁰

The second AAR originated from a company commander in the 101st Airborne (Air Assault) based on his unit's operations in OIF-I as well. This AAR identified four focus areas for training to prepare Soldiers including marksmanship, crew served weapons, reflexive fire techniques, and casualty evacuation.³¹ Marksmanship remains the core of excellence for all Soldiers. In addition to basic marksmanship, Soldiers need training on burst fire and reflexive fire techniques.³² It is critical that Soldiers familiarize on all crew served weapons in the unit. Every Soldier must know how to load, fire, clear, and reduce stoppages and misfires of every crew served weapon.³³ Casualty evacuation remains a critical requirement in the training of every Soldier and unit. The AAR identified three critical aspects to training for handling casualties. First, train the Soldiers to secure the area before focusing on the casualty; the combat engagement takes priority.³⁴ Second, integrate casualties into all training, however, teach the Soldiers to focus on the enemy first.³⁵ Third, train every Soldier in triage techniques, use of a tourniquet, and calling for medical evacuation (MEDEVAC).³⁶ While these critical tasks are helpful to focus training, the company commander continued to emphasize the importance of replicating the urban conditions of the fight. The AAR consistently advised that training for this environment requires increasing difficulty and execution in an urban environment.³⁷

While there were some specific tasks identified in these AARs from the force, the common theme in both remained the full spectrum nature of the combat environment. Obviously, Soldiers must be proficient in combat tasks, but more importantly, they must be able to perform them in conditions varying from direct engagements to security of the

population and everything in between. The ability to achieve this rests in the Soldiers' understanding and execution of the ROE.

AARs from the Training Centers

While we made great strides in training since 9/11, it is critical to continue to capture lessons learned. The best resource for these ideas and current feedback remains the CALL. Of all the reports available, the most valuable report on training at the Soldier level is the quarterly reports from the National Training Center. These reports provide some extremely useful information on the level and focus recommended to prepare Soldiers to be successful with specific focus on the COIN environment.

According to these reports, the patrol is the baseline maneuver element on the COIN battlefield.³⁸ All units use patrolling techniques to maneuver, secure routes, conduct reconnaissance, and conduct combat operations. With properly trained Soldiers, these patrols can provide critical information to assist in developing the situation in the local area. When improperly trained, these patrols can destroy in a day what a unit may have developed over a long period. The challenge remains in how to train Soldiers and what skills should training focus on to enable them to succeed in this environment.

The National Training Center recommends eight COIN fundamentals: negotiation skills, cultural understanding, language capability, escalation of force/rules of engagement, search/detain/prosecute, tactical questioning, counter improvised explosive device/counter sniper, and every Soldier is a sensor and ambassador.³⁹ While there are numerous tasks to focus on in preparation for COIN operations, these eight fundamentals have proven to be the critical tasks that enable units to successfully

dislocate the enemy from the people and reduce their vulnerabilities operating within the population.⁴⁰

The first of these skills, negotiations, addresses the personal interaction that occurs daily between Soldiers and the local population.⁴¹ These skills enable Soldiers to use the tools available to interact appropriately with local populations, convey the appropriate message, and over time to gain the populace's confidence. While a great deal of responsibility lies on staffs and leaders to disseminate appropriate information down to the lowest levels, ultimately the individual Soldier must interact with the people. Each Soldier must be able to understand and use priority intelligence requirements, information operations themes, messages, talking points, and media-engagement guidelines.⁴² Proper use of these tools assist the Soldier in effectively engaging with the locals and make each patrol more effective in gathering necessary information to support the overall mission.

Understanding the local culture and the language further enables the Soldiers' ability to operate effectively in a COIN environment. While there is never enough time for Soldiers to develop expertise in these areas, each Soldier must master certain critical points. Each Soldier must develop a respect for the religion, family relationships, role of children, and other cultural aspects.⁴³ To compliment this cultural understanding, each Soldier must learn key language phrases and hand gestures in order to communicate at the most basic level.⁴⁴ The combination of these skills set the conditions for patrols to be more successful in gathering intelligence and diffusing daily conflicts while building rapport and trust with the local population.⁴⁵

As Soldiers develop cultural skills, they must also develop a detailed understanding of escalation of force/ROE. Soldiers must understand these rules in order to apply the proper force during COIN operations. The nature of COIN operations forces units to perform across the full spectrum of operations to include offensive, defensive, stability, and support operations. A Soldier must understand and properly apply the proper firepower to defeat a threat and protect the force.⁴⁶ Additionally, a full understanding of ROE enables Soldiers to be more effective with the fundamental tasks of search, detain, and prosecute. All Soldiers must be trained to execute the “5 Ss and T” technique (search, silence, segregate, safeguard, speed to safe area, and tag) while balancing the unit’s force protection and the cultural considerations of the local population.⁴⁷ Of all the skills a Soldier must master, understanding and executing according to the ROE is common to the success of all missions.

The concept of the Soldier as a sensor and ambassador encompasses the last four of the fundamentals. The linked fundamentals include tactical questioning, counter IED, and counter sniper. With the proper training, the Soldier is the most critical sensor a unit has on the battlefield. As we all know, every Soldier has five senses at their disposal to gather information on the surrounding environment. Like most sensors, proper calibration enables Soldiers to filter and decipher all the surrounding stimulants in order to gather the required information; otherwise, they are a wasted resource. Proper training equips Soldiers’ with the ability to understand the nuances of their assigned area, from major changes to very subtle adjustments to everyday life on the street.⁴⁸ Just as Soldiers sense their surroundings, they project the image of the United States; therefore, the concept that every Soldier is an ambassador is a very important

consideration in the overall intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance plan.⁴⁹ The concept of the Soldier as a sensor and ambassador drives home the importance of cultural awareness and the idea that every Soldier is a strategic corporal with the associated implications linked to his daily actions.⁵⁰

Tactical questioning and counter IED/sniper are equally important to the Soldier as a sensor. Not to be confused with interrogation, tactical questioning trains a Soldier in the proper questions used in everyday interaction with the civilian population to focus intelligence gathering.⁵¹ While staffs and commanders develop the root of these questions, the Soldier is the point of engagement with the local population. Likewise, counter IED/sniper relies on the Soldier as a sensor. In order for these two concepts to be effective, training must focus on identifying the systems that support IEDs and snipers. Upon identification of these threats, Soldiers must be able to execute the appropriate battle drill to respond to the threat.⁵²

The New COIN Doctrine, FM 3-24

An additional resource is the recently published Army doctrine on COIN, FM 3-24. This document spells out how to fight and win a counterinsurgency, and a thorough analysis points out some very specific expectations of our Soldiers. This new doctrine focuses on the squad as the base element for success in the COIN environment and encourages trainers to prioritize squad training over company and platoon level training.⁵³ More specifically, it tells us to train on basic skills to include marksmanship, patrolling, security on the move and at the halt, and basic battle drills.⁵⁴ In addition, key to success in COIN operations is the Soldiers' ability to live close to the populace.⁵⁵ Tasks that enable Soldiers to live on the ground, move on foot, and interact with local

populations are a top priority to prepare Soldiers for COIN operations. The final point from FM 3-24 involves the Soldier as an ambassador. As with lessons learned from the training centers, FM 3-24 highlights the individual Soldier in respect to the global audience. It is critical to train Soldiers to understand how both the local population and the media perceive them.⁵⁶

Army Operations Doctrine, FM 3-0.

With all the current focus on COIN and operations in Iraq, it is easy to overlook the other requirements on our Army across the full spectrum of operations. All Soldiers must be able to perform missions spanning from offensive and defensive operations in a high intensity environment to stability and support operations in a low intensity environment. Additionally, Soldiers must shift between the operations rapidly by understanding ROE and other controls that establish boundaries for the use of force. This requires our Soldiers to possess the proficiency and cognitive ability, as well as the self-discipline, to determine where he is on the spectrum and take action accordingly. This level of training can only come from experiential based training that forces a Soldier to make judgment decisions, followed up with pointed AARs to spread the learning across the remainder of the unit.

FM 3-0 addresses the full spectrum of operations to include offensive, defensive, stability and support operations.⁵⁷ While this document lays out very specific guidance for Army Operations, its guidance on individual Soldier training is limited. It best captures the description of the expectation of Soldier proficiency in the following words: “The Army needs competent and versatile soldiers able to accomplish missions in a challenging and ever changing global environment. They must successfully accomplish

tasks while operating alone or in small groups. Soldiers and leaders must exercise mature judgment and initiative under stressful circumstances and be capable of learning and adapting to meet the demands of full spectrum operations.⁵⁸ Soldiers must also be technically and tactically proficient. They must employ and maintain increasingly complex and sophisticated equipment. Current and future technology requires skilled soldiers who understand their systems. Regardless of the importance of equipment or the expansion of technological capabilities, soldiers are more important than machines. Soldiers, not equipment, accomplish missions and win wars.”⁵⁹

Defining the Aim Point

Based on the analysis of these AARs and direction from doctrine some common threads appear. It is imperative that we refocus our training to align with the “aim point” methodology outlined in doctrine.⁶⁰ This aim point describes the set of conditions under which Army forces train their core mission essential tasks until the assignment of a directed mission.⁶¹ In doctrine, the aim point encompasses major combat operations, irregular warfare, and limited intervention. These operational themes exist in an environment that includes aspects of both an insurgency and conditions of general war. Emphasis on offensive and stability operations are most pronounced under these conditions with some minor requirements for defensive tasks.

Merging this information with the lessons learned from the field and guidance from doctrine, the aim point for the IET environment begins to come into focus. While fundamentals of marksmanship and first aid remain important, we must train our Soldiers in advanced marksmanship and lifesaving skills as well. In order to prepare them for the environment, we must train them in cultural awareness and reinforce this

training with opportunities to interact with local populations. Within the context of this training, Soldiers have the opportunity to learn and practice skills in patrolling, battle drills, and intelligence collection (Soldier as a sensor). Training must include live fires as often as possible to reinforce realism and enhance the Soldiers' confidence. The most important factor to focus the training becomes the training environment. This environment must replicate the rapidly changing environment Soldiers face in full spectrum operations. The environment must demand Soldiers make judgment-based decisions in accordance with the established ROE. At IET, it is crucial to invest in this type of environment as a capstone event to codify lessons learned throughout the Soldiers' IET experience.

Aligning Training with the Aim Point

Understanding how IET evolved since 9/11 and what the aim point for IET should be, it is much easier to align training with that aim point. The fact that the evolution of IET is so mature minimizes the adjustment necessary to achieve the desired result. The first step is to capitalize and expand on the enormous progress since we entered the GWOT. The Warrior Tasks & Drills must remain as the cornerstone of training with the addition of some key skills identified in our analysis. Throughout the training of these tasks, it is imperative that the training environment reflect the full spectrum of conflict. The accurate replication of this environment provides the vehicle to train and practice Soldiers in the use of ROE, which guides the Soldier in the transition of operations along the spectrum of conflict. Executing all these recommendations will adjust training at IET on the aim point; however, it is imperative to continue to evolve the IET culture in order to enact lasting change.

Maintaining and Enhancing the Warrior Tasks & Drills

The cornerstone of the improvements in IET since 9/11 is the Warrior Tasks & Drills. These tasks and drills focus training and ensure standard combat skills for all military occupation specialties (MOS). Currently, the Warrior Tasks include groupings of tasks focusing on key areas including:

- Shoot (16-17 tasks),
- Communicate (4-5 tasks),
- Joint Urban Operations (3 tasks),
- Move (7-8 tasks),
- and Fight (15 tasks).⁶²

The Warrior Drills include:

- React to Contact (Visual, IED, Direct Fire [Includes RPG]),
- Avoid Ambush,
- React to Ambush (Blocked and Unblocked),
- React to Indirect Fire,
- React to Chemical Attack,
- Break Contact,
- Dismount a Vehicle,
- Evacuate Injured Personnel from Vehicle,
- and Secure at a Halt.⁶³

These tasks and drills provide Soldiers' a solid foundation to perform almost any mission. The IET program of instruction (POI) includes the majority of these Warrior

Tasks, and trainers use many of the Warrior Drills to reinforce these tasks in the context that they occur during combat operations.

Some key individual and collective tasks that would further enhance a Soldier's development center around cultural awareness and the Soldier as a sensor. Many units within IET are already attempting to train Soldiers in these tasks; however, they lack the time and additional resources to execute this training effectively. The Army should add these tasks to the Warrior Tasks & Drills and resource them at the appropriate level across IET.

Cultural awareness training enhances a Soldier's understanding of the unique nature of other cultures and empowers him to use this knowledge to his advantage in the conduct of the mission. Cultural awareness should draw on active theaters like Iraq and the Arab culture and include scenarios that Soldiers encounter daily on combat missions. Additionally, language tools like "Rosetta Stone" are effective in training Soldiers on key terms and phrases to assist them in breaching the language barrier with that culture.⁶⁴

Soldier as a sensor addresses a Soldier's ability to sense and process the battlefield. This gets at the heart of a Soldier's cognitive ability to question things he experiences. This may be enemy activity observed, but more likely, it is the general activity of people going about their daily life. Oftentimes it is not what the Soldier sees, but rather what is not present, that prompts him to know something is out of place. Trainers can present this task in a classroom environment; however, Soldiers must apply the tasks in realistic training scenarios to ensure comprehension. As with cultural awareness, use of computer simulation to practice this task can be effective.

Replicating the Environment

While the tasks and standards are important, the conditions reinforce when a Soldier performs a specific task. It is imperative that trainers replicate the conditions of the full spectrum of conflict when developing and executing training. We always include the enemy and an objective, but what about the people, a market, refugees, etc.? All these are critical aspects of the full spectrum of conflict. The key to replicating the environment in IET is scale. Resources prohibit building and staffing villages with role players, however creative trainers can replicate some of these role players on an allowable scale to meet training objectives. At a minimum, these objectives must include role players to stimulate interaction between the Soldiers and the population. The main point is to think it through and include as much of the environment as possible in all training events. The level of proficiency a Soldier reaches in training relates directly to the realism of the training environment.

Across IET, units are using the squad and patrolling as the vehicle for training, and this needs to continue. As noted in many of the AARs from theater, the patrol is the base element for most actions in combat.⁶⁵ When planning these squad level patrol missions, they must include events that stimulate Soldiers to determine which tasks need to be performed and why. For example, Soldiers on patrol take sniper fire while interacting with non-combatants. There are casualties on both sides. Obvious tasks include react to sniper, first aid, casualty evacuation, and security; but, what about Soldier as a sensor? What indicators did Soldiers see that could indicate a sniper in the area? Was there abnormal activity in the town? Were the villagers acting in an unusual manner? These subtle additions in the environment, combined with a well-led AAR, allow trainers to reinforce these lessons in training.

As Soldiers continue to progress through training, trainers must advance the conditions to include live fire exercises. Across most IET, training bases Soldiers are conducting numerous live fires including buddy-team, convoy, and reflexive fire exercises. These exercises build confidence in a Soldiers' ability to perform under combat conditions.

Training and Practicing the use of ROE

Comparing training to a car, the tasks are the engine, the road is the environment, and the ROE is the transmission. Effective understanding and use of the ROE enables a Soldier to rapidly transition between the differing missions along the spectrum of conflict. Too often, we find ROE taught in the classroom by a lawyer. This may be a first step, but trainers must continually teach and reinforce effective use of ROE during all training. Trainers must design scenarios that force Soldiers into situations that require judgment-based decisions. These scenarios may be stimulated with role players or use of "shoot/don't shoot" scenarios on a live fire exercise.⁶⁶ The main point is to design scenarios that require a Soldier to react, make a decision, and execute. Follow this immediately with detailed AARs that discuss the Soldier's decision, the consequences of that decision, and other options available to the Soldier. If trainers take this approach to embed ROE into all the training, Soldiers will have a better opportunity to internalize the true nature of ROE and become more effective in its application.

Continuing to Evolve the IET Culture

Up to this point the discussion has focused entirely on what to train and how best to accomplish that training. This was a similar focus in 2003 with the first efforts to evolve the IET environment. During that time, huge undercurrents resisting change

became evident. This is understandable as the IET environment, steeped in tradition was a single “rite of passage” for Soldiers through the recent history of our Army. As we continue to evolve IET, we must remain cognizant of this resistance to change. Some key factors that will assist in effecting change include the use of the NCOs, the importance the Army places on the mission, and the way the Army resources the changes.

The NCOs are the key to success in any Army organization and will be even more critical in implementing changes in IET. The competence and professionalism of the NCO Corps is the only way any changes will be effective and lasting. We must empower these NCOs to lead and train our Soldiers and keep them involved throughout the process. Unlike 2003, our NCO Corps has a wealth of knowledge based on recent combat experience, regardless of their military occupational skill.

Although our NCOs can perform amazing feats when training our Soldiers, the importance the Army places on the mission will be a critical factor in effecting any recommended change. For an Army at war, assignments at the training base generally leave an indelible mark on a professional’s record limiting opportunities for further advancement into higher leadership positions. Because of mission priority, the training base is often undermanned, and even when manned to authorization, lacks the necessary personnel to conduct effective training. This results in overworked Drill Sergeants conducting “efficient” operations resulting in processing Soldiers rather than training them.

As with most Army initiatives, you can determine the priority by following the money trail. Looking at how the Army resources the changes will provide an immediate

measure of how effective the change will be. One of the major reasons lasting changes occurred since 9/11 is because GEN Schoomaker placed the emphasis on the Soldier as the base element of our Army. With that emphasis, the training base received the resources and other support necessary to make the required adjustments to the training environment. Leaders at all levels must continue this support as we make necessary adjustments to the training.

Conclusion

As identified from Clausewitz, the purpose of the Soldier is the engagement.⁶⁷ For a period following 9/11, we defined this engagement based on the war in Iraq. As operations in Iraq mature, it is crucial that we re-focus our forces on the next engagement. As this engagement is ill defined, we must prepare for operations across the full spectrum of conflict. Since 9/11, the changes in training produced numerous lessons learned, increased the effectiveness of training across all the IET bases, and set the conditions for continued improvements. With this experience and our current doctrine, we can more accurately define the aim point for the next engagement and use this to focus training. This knowledge, combined with the current momentum for change within the training base, enable us to align initial entry training with the aim point.

Endnotes

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